

## Economic News Release



### Workplace Injury and Illness Summary

OS NR 10/21/2010 News Release: Workplace injuries and illnesses--2009

For release 10:00 a.m. (EDT) Thursday, October 21, 2010

USDL-10-1451

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#### WORKPLACE INJURIES AND ILLNESSES--2009

Nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses among private industry employers declined in 2009 to a rate of 3.6 cases per 100 equivalent full-time workers--down from 3.9 cases in 2008, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See table 1.) Similarly, the number of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses reported in 2009 declined to 3.3 million cases, compared to 3.7 million cases in 2008. (See table 2.) The total recordable case (TRC) injury and illness incidence rate among private industry employers has declined significantly each year since 2003, when estimates from the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) were first published using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). (See <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshsum.htm> for links to news releases and tables for prior years.)

#### Key findings from the 2009 Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

- \* Incidence rates for injuries and illnesses combined among private industry establishments declined significantly in 2009 for all case types, with the exception of days-away-from-work cases whose rate remained relatively unchanged from 2008 at the level of rounding presented in this release. (See chart 1.) The number of cases of injuries and illnesses combined declined significantly in 2009 for all case types.

- \* The manufacturing industry sector reported the largest year-to-year decline in injuries and illnesses since NAICS was introduced in 2003--falling by 23 percent (161,100 cases) from 2008 to 2009, lowering the incidence rate by 0.7 cases to 4.3 cases per 100 workers. The drop in cases reported in this sector represents nearly 39 percent of the total private industry decline in injuries and illnesses in 2009.

- \* The construction industry sector reported 71,700 fewer cases in 2009, compared to 2008--a 22 percent decline, lowering the incidence rate by 0.4 cases to 4.3 cases per 100 workers. The decline in reported cases among the manufacturing and construction industry sectors together represents nearly 56 percent of the total private industry decline in injuries and illnesses in 2009.

- \* The incidence rate of injuries only among private industry workers fell from 3.7 to 3.4 cases per 100 workers between 2008 and 2009, resulting from an 11 percent drop in the number of injury cases.

- \* Both the incidence rate and the number of illness cases declined significantly in 2009, compared to 2008--led by a decline among the 'Skin diseases' category which accounted for nearly 47 percent of the decline in illness cases among private industry establishments.

Slightly more than one-half of the 3.3 million private industry injury and illness cases reported nationally in 2009 were of a more serious nature that involved days away from work, job transfer, or restriction--commonly referred to as DART cases. These occurred at a rate of 1.8 cases per 100 workers, declining from 2.0 cases in 2008. (See table 7.) Among the two components of DART cases, the rate of cases requiring job transfer or restriction fell from 0.9 to 0.8 cases per 100 workers, while the rate for cases involving days away from work remained relatively unchanged in 2009 (1.1 cases) at the level of rounding presented in this release. (Components do not sum to total due to rounding.) Manufacturing was the only private industry sector in 2009 in which the rate of job transfer or restriction cases exceeded the rate of cases with days away from work, continuing a 12-year trend. Other recordable cases--those not involving days away from work, job transfer, or restriction--accounted for the remaining injury and illness cases nationally and occurred at a lower rate in 2009 (1.8 cases per 100 workers) compared to 2008 (1.9 cases per 100 workers).

The total recordable case injury and illness incidence rate was highest in 2009 among mid-size private industry establishments (those employing between 50 and 249 workers) and lowest among small establishments (those employing fewer than 11 workers) compared to establishments of other sizes. (See

table 3 and chart 2.)

#### Private Industry Injuries and Illnesses

Injuries. Approximately 3.1 million (94.9 percent) of the 3.3 million nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses in 2009 were injuries--of which 2.3 million (74.8 percent) occurred in service-providing industries, which employed 81.1 percent of the private industry workforce covered by this survey. (See table 5.) The remaining nearly 0.8 million injuries (25.2 percent) occurred in goods-producing industries, which accounted for 18.9 percent of private industry employment in 2009.

Illnesses. Workplace illnesses accounted for slightly more than 5 percent of the 3.3 million injury and illness cases in 2009. (See table 6b.) Private industry employers reported 11 percent fewer illness cases in 2009--down to 166,200 cases, compared to 187,400 in 2008. This resulted in a decline in the rate of workplace illnesses in 2009 from 19.7 to 18.3 cases per 10,000 full-time workers. (See table 6a.)

Goods-producing industries as a whole accounted for approximately 34 percent of all occupational illness cases and were responsible for nearly two-thirds of the decline in illnesses reported among private industry workplaces in 2009. Consequently, both the number and rate of illnesses declined significantly for goods-producing industries as a whole in 2009. The manufacturing sector accounted for nearly 29 percent of all occupational illnesses cases and reported 11,200 fewer illnesses in 2009 compared to 2008. While the number of illness cases among service-providing industries as a whole declined by 7,500 cases, the incidence rate was statistically unchanged in 2009, compared to 2008.

#### National Public Sector Estimates

National public sector estimates covering nearly 19 million State and local government workers--for example, Police protection (NAICS 922120) and Fire protection (NAICS 922160)--are available from the SOII for just the second year for 2009.

Nearly 863,000 injury and illness cases were reported among State and local government workers combined in 2009, resulting in a rate of 5.8 cases per 100 workers--significantly higher than the rate among private industry workers (3.6 cases per 100 workers), but lower than the rate (6.3 cases) reported among these public sector workers in 2008. Nearly 4 in 5 injuries and illnesses reported in the public sector occurred among local government workers in 2009, resulting in an injury and illness rate of 6.3 cases per 100 workers--significantly higher than the 4.6 cases per 100 workers in State government. (See Chart 3.)

#### State Estimates

Private and public sector estimates are available for 41 participating States (including the District of Columbia) individually for 2009. Data for establishments in the ten States for which individual estimates are unavailable are collected by BLS regional offices and used solely for the tabulation of national estimates. (See chart 4.) State estimates will be available online 10 business days following the release of national estimates; these data may also be requested prior to this from respective State offices. (See <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshstate.htm> for State contacts.)

As compared to a year earlier, private industry TRC incidence rates among the 41 States (including the District of Columbia) for which estimates were available in 2009 declined in 16 States and remained statistically unchanged in the remaining 25 States.

The private industry TRC incidence rate was higher in 22 States than the national rate of 3.6 cases per 100 full-time workers in 2009, lower than the national rate in 11 States, and not statistically different from the national rate in eight States. Differences in industry mix account for at least some of the differences in rates across States.

#### Publication Tables and Supplemental Charts

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has generated estimates of injuries and illnesses for many of the 2-, 3-, 4-, 5-, and 6-digit industries as defined in the 2007 North American Industry Classification System manual. A complete listing of these estimates is not available in this release. However, summary tables 1 and 2--providing incidence rates and counts of injuries and illnesses by detailed industry, case type, and ownership (e.g., total recordable cases or cases with days away from work in private industry), respectively--may be accessed electronically from <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshsum.htm> or requested from BLS staff at 202-691-6170 or by email at [IIFSTAFF@bls.gov](mailto:IIFSTAFF@bls.gov). Supplemental tables and charts illustrating trends among incidence rates and counts are also available from these sources.

#### Background of the Survey

Second in a series of three releases from the BLS covering occupational safety and health statistics for 2009, this release follows the August report on fatal work-related injuries from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. A third release in November 2010 will provide case circumstances and worker characteristics from the SOII for nonfatal injury and illness cases requiring at least one day away from work to recuperate.

Beginning with estimates for 2009, the SOII program began classifying industry using the 2007 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS 2007). SOII industry estimates from 2003 to 2008 were classified using NAICS 2002. NAICS 2007 includes revisions across several sectors, the most significant occurring in the information sector (NAICS 51) where industries in NAICS subsector 516 (Internet publishing and broadcasting) are reclassified elsewhere (eliminating NAICS 516) and in NAICS subsector 517 (Telecommunications) where several industries have been reclassified. For more detailed information regarding NAICS revisions, visit <http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm>.

Additional background and methodological information regarding the BLS occupational safety and health program, including information such as changes in the definition of recordable cases due to revised recordkeeping requirements in 2002 and the inherent underreporting of illnesses, can be found in Chapter 9 of the BLS Handbook of Methods at [http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch9\\_a.htm](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch9_a.htm).

(Chart 1 appears here in the printed release.)

(Chart 2 appears here in the printed release.)

(Chart 3 appears here in the printed release.)

(Chart 4 appears here in the printed release.)

[Table 1. Incidence rates of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses by case type and ownership, selected industries, 2009](#)

[Table 2. Numbers of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses by case type and ownership, selected industries, 2009](#)

[Table 3. Incidence rates of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses by major industry sector, employment size, and ownership, 2009](#)

[Table 4. Number of cases and incidence rate of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses for industries with 100,000 or more cases, 2009](#)

[Table 5. Incidence rates and numbers of nonfatal occupational injuries by selected industries and ownership, 2009](#)

[Table 6. Incidence rates and numbers of nonfatal occupational illnesses by major industry sector, category of illness, and ownership, 2009](#)

[Table 7. Incidence rates of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses by major private industry sector and selected case types, 2007-2009](#)

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